



With recent changes in management

## Now prison guards can also be PENALIZED

**THERE** seems to be a situation of tension at KIA again, this time under the prison guards. Apparently the Director of KIA Trudy Hassell has introduced changes in management where prison guards can be viewed as the offenders and even be penalized for their behavior.

According to recent information, KIA management has decided that if a prisoner is found with drugs or a cell phone that prison guards will be held responsible

for this, and can be punished. "This is not possible," a prison guard said to Aruba Traveller staff. According to this guard, it is not their fault that prisoners sometimes receive these items even when they try their utmost to make sure these items do not enter the prison.

Instead of the prisoner receiving punishment for carrying drugs, weapons, or cell phones, now the guards can be held responsible for allowing these items into the prison. "Why are the prisoners who have

been found with these items not being interrogated?" the guard asked.

The situation is causing much lack of motivation for the prison guards and apparently many cases of sick leave as well.

The new policy has not yet been officially introduced, but the prison guards complain that they were not involved in the process of this new system, even though they will have to carry out the work.





# NOW

## is the moment when we must reach a balanced budget

**AFTER** finalizing the first round of questions in Parliament during the budget meeting of the Ministry of Tourism, Transport, Primary Sector and Culture, Minister Otmar Oduber said that he will use report numbers to clarify the questions on tourism and show the reality of tourism in Aruba, which is contrary to insinuations that Tourism is not doing well.

Concerning the signing of the protocol, the Minister said that any politician who truly stands in defense of his island and believes in the fight that started in the 40s will always stand for it.

Then the Minister in his turn questioned the MEP party's motives, because according to the Minister, never in all of the party's trajectory of the last couple of years has the party made a gesture that shows that they stand in defense of the island's autonomy or have they fought for the right of auto determination and all of the aspects of the fight related to the Separate Status.

They speak about it many times, said the Minister, but they are never seen taking any actions. They only thing they try, the Minister went on, is to come to power and they think that by imposing through the Netherlands they can reach their political goals. So there are many examples of each time that they show that they do not stand for what they so strongly voice to believe, the Minister said.

Minister Oduber also said that now is the moment when we must stand for what we believe in, stand for the chosen route to reach a balance budget. Aruba is the only country in the Kingdom that has had economic growth consecutively over the past five years, Oduber said, contrary to others, and today we must roll up our sleeves and make sure that the plan that has been placed before us is executed and that we reach a balanced budget by 2018.

## Former Valero Director is now on the Board of Directors of Occidental Petroleum



**ACCORDING** to a recent Occidental Petroleum Corporation publication, Bill Klesse, formerly of the Valero Energy Corporation, has been elected onto the Board of Occidental Petroleum Corp.

Klesse, who is 68, was formerly the Chairman of the Board of Directors

of Valero, having joined them in 2005. He also worked as the CEO of Valero until May 2014. Klesse was the executive that the Government headed by Prime Minister Nel Oduber negotiated with unsuccessfully. At which time Oduber told Klesse to place the refinery on his back and leave Aruba.



MEP Fraction

# Questioning MANAGEMENT of Otmar Oduber's Ministry



**ON** Thursday the budget meetings in Parliament continued treating the Ministry of Tourism, Transport, Primary Sector, and Culture. The Members of the MEP Fraction focused, among others, on the quality of tourism and on culture.

Concerned Parliament Member Dangui Oduber said: "There is a fictitious growth, and this growth is thanks to the unusual growth in the tourists from Venezuela. The numbers indicate that a tourist today spends far less per day compared to in the year 2008. The tourists who are coming to Aruba cannot be considered a sustained development. The occupancy per night has dropped; occupancy at private homes and in apartments has increased. According to the ATA director they will be adjusting the projections of tourists from Venezuela, taking the social-economic situation of this country into account. By saying this she has started to alert the people that this year tourism will drop."

Fraction leader of the MEP Evelyn Wever-Croes during the debate with the Tourism Minister emphasized the need to protect our only economic pillar. "Tourism is our only economic pillar, and experts in the field have expressed their concerns. Tourism alone cannot continue to carry our economy. The risk is that it may burn out and then we would lose everything. That is why I have asked the Government to work on diversifying our economy and not to destroy the economic

pillar of the refinery."

Parliament Member Guillfred Besaril raised concerns on agriculture. He said: "Local farmers are confronting a difficult period because of several reasons. Water is one of the highest costs for those who are in agriculture. The problem of water is so chronic that there farmers who are almost bankrupt. Farmers suggested a Fixed Price for water from WEB or the possibility of purchasing the water that WEB uses for rinsing tubes at a good price." Besaril asked the Minister how he plans to handle this issue. Besaril also said farmers have been complaining about unfair competition of products from abroad. The Minister was asked how he plans to protect the local farmers from the unfair competition that the group is worried about.

Parliament Member Xiomara Ruiz-Maduro believes the proposed parking meters in the downtown area will have a negative effect on business in the Main Street at this time. She says the reconstruction works that took place during the last Government period has already resulted in much loss in sales and jobs, and even caused the closing of many businesses. Ruiz-Maduro also asked the Minister to bring clarity concerning the rumors of his retirement from the Government of AVP related to the Board of Financial Supervision (CFT) protocol. After which the leader came out congratulating the people for the signing of the protocol.

## Minister Benny Sevinger gets caught in chain accident on Schotlandstraat



**MINISTER** Benny Sevinger apparently got caught in a chain accident involving ten vehicles on Schotlandstraat on Saturday afternoon. This took place around the ABC Tours property, where a truck apparently spilled oil on the road, causing the cars to slip and run into each other.

The truck involved belonged to AWCOF, a company that collects industrial oil to export for recycling. The truck was coming from Pos Chikito. During that part of the drive the oil was spilling but still limited, and did not cause any accidents. But by the time the truck reached Schotlandstraat the lid of the oil container reportedly broke off completely, spilling used oil all over the road while the truck was still driving.

The truck driver did not even realize the disaster he was leaving behind. All in all there were ten vehicles involved in seven crashes. Thankfully there were no injuries among the victims, but there was substantial material damage.

The DOW was called to the site to pour sand on the spilled oil and prevent further damage. The oil company will be held responsible for the damages caused.





## I cannot understand why MEP is against modernizing Education



**ONE** of the most asked questions during the Parliament budget meeting on Education was about the Gerrit Rietveld Academy of the Netherlands which has a branch established on Aruba. "This is one of the most frequently repeated topics," Minister of Education Michelle Hooyboer-Winklaar said, "And I don't understand why the students of Rietveld Aruba are not permitted the luxury of having a prep school in the arts at the level of Rietveld."

Gerrit Rietveld Aruba has apparently been established for four years already on the island of Aruba, reportedly has its own Caribbean character, is playing a prominent role in the Aruban community, says the Ministry of Education, and is educating talented young people in fine arts, including sculpting and design. The preparatory

program started on October 10, 2011, when the first phase lasted for 30 weeks. Several teachers from the Gerrit Rietveld Academy in Amsterdam came to teach various subjects, including theory, in this prep course.

A total of 110 students went through the Academy, 97 percent Arubans, and 20 of them, 18.2 percent, were accepted into Gerrit Rietveld Academy Amsterdam where there are six programs being offered, two Bachelor degrees, in Sculpting and Design, and four Master's studies, in Design, Crafts, Fine Arts, and Interior Architecture. Concerning the comparison in costs, the Education Minister said the Rietveld Academy Aruba costs Afl 2400 per student, while the University of Aruba students each cost Afl 3500, and the teacher's college IPA students cost Afl 3370.

"It is regrettable that the MEP Fraction in Parliament continues to attack a group of students who want to study something different at this level," said Minister Hooyboer-Winklaar. To illustrate the importance and value of this study, the leader referred to the experience of one student who was accepted into the Bachelor program with just his MAVO high school diploma.

Joris, a first year student says, "The preparatory course was the moment when everything changed for me. I discovered what I wanted to do in my life. I had dropped out of the EPI. I had been studying Hospitality. One assignment I received was to write a story. I decided to make something up instead of writing a boring story about what I had done during the school break. My parents were called in to the school. They thought I was crazy.

I didn't return. I knew I needed to have a HAVO high school degree to be accepted into Gerrit Rietveld, but based on my portfolio from the preparatory course I was allowed to apply anyway! It is quite an exception to be accepted with a MAVO high school diploma into the Rietveld program."

This year, the Ministry of Education informs, Rietveld Academy received 250 applications for the 2016-2017 school year, of which 157 are Aruban students who want to pursue a degree in the arts. "The fact that a monument is being used cannot be held against the students of the Rietveld Academy," Hooyboer-Winklaar said. "And no matter how much the Opposition tries to smear this [project], I will continue to support them until we implement the Bachelor program, because I do believe in these students," the Minister said.





## The Aruba Chamber and Élever Strategy present **TEDxOranjestadWomen,** an innovative and different conference

Élever Strategy & Solutions backed by the Aruba Chamber of Commerce (KvK) present the TEDxOranjestadWomen conference, for the first time on Aruba, on May 28, 2015. This conference which will feature a combination of live streamed presentations from the TEDWomen conference in Monterrey California and four local speakers will be held at the KvK auditorium.

### TED Talks

TED is a non-profit organization dedicated to the sharing of ideas. Usually the TED Talk is a power speech lasting about 18 minutes or less. TED was initiated in 1984 as a conference where technology, entertainment and design were the main topics. Nowadays it is the conference that touches all topics, from science to others of global importance. TEDx events such as the TEDxOranjestadWomen, are independently organized events with the goal of sharing innovative ideas within the community.

TED is a global community where people from all corners of the world, from all disciplines and cultures come together in one conference, either personally or virtually, to gain a better understanding of today's world. TED fervently believes that innovative ideas have the power to change attitudes, lives, and ultimately the entire world.

### Goal of the Conference

Spark, Surface, Seduce, Sustain, Shift, Share.

The goal of the conference is to set off a spark in the participants to create innovative ideas, motivate them to take action, and bring the barriers that keep them from success in their personal and professional lives to the surface. Also how we sometimes subconsciously participate in discrimination. Scientific proof and examples of daily life will seduce the participants to think positively

and differently in order to sustain a high level of leadership and shift our thinking in ways that connect us with others instead of dividing us. The conference will stimulate participants to share their experiences and achievements with each other.

During the conference four local speakers will give their first TED Talk. This speech, aside from being presented to the audience will also be uploaded on the TED YouTube channel, making it accessible to millions of people around the world. The local speakers are Valerie Croes, Wendy Maduro Johnson, Nathalie Maduro, and Yakari Gabriel.

The international speakers who will be featured via live stream include former American President Jimmy Carter, Jane Fonda, and Maria Bello, famous actors and activists.

The conference will be split into two sections. Section 1 is the Spark & Surface section, which will start at 11:00 a.m. and end at 3:00 p.m. Section 2 is the Seduce & Sustain section, which will start at 5:00 p.m. and end at 9:00 p.m. Additional information about the conference is available on the Facebook page TEDxOranjestadWomen or by calling the KvK at 582-1566 ext. 27 of 42.

Keep reading below for a brief bio of each local speaker.

### Valerie Croes

Valerie is a 35-old Aruban young woman who lives in New York. After finishing her degree in the Netherlands, Valerie started her professional career in Aruba as a fiscal lawyer. After growing in this position, she took on the challenge of working in New York and became the director of the International Tax Financial Services at PricewaterhouseCoopers. Valerie is the founder of The Liv Group, a new and innovative company with the goal of changing

how we think, live, and do business. Valerie reached the top of her career in a record time, but still felt that she was missing something. After a period of re-evaluating her life and career, Valerie is now working with companies across the globe, advising them in innovative ideas.

### Wendy Maduro Johnson

Wendy is a young Aruban, a radical feminist, and a fervent defender of breastfeeding. From a very young age Wendy had a passion for human rights, and women's rights. Wendy will share her personal experience of growing up in an extremely religious environment and her decision to become an atheist. In a refreshing way Wendy will present her point of view of how women today, the so-called Millennial Females, see friendship.

### Nathalie Maduro

Nathalie is the first female director of the Department of Agriculture, Cattle Breeding and Fishing in Aruba, known as Santa Rosa. Nathalie's expertise and enthusiasm to direct this department is derived from her life as a female farmer and breeder, which she has been doing together with her partner and two children for the past 12 years. Before joining the department, Nathalie worked for 22 years in the Aruba Tourism Authority both on Aruba and in the U.S. Nathalie will share her vision for agriculture on Aruba and many innovative ways to grow the primary sector on Aruba.

### Yakari Gabriel

Yakari is a writer and in her free time recites poetry. Yakari came to Aruba when she was four years old. As the daughter of a Dominican emigrant, from a very young age Yakari had to fight off the Latino stereotyping in our community. Many times she uses her personal experiences as an inspiration for her poetry. Yakari is a young woman with a strong character who is determined to change the world through words.



## Enthusiastic teens collect for the **Queen Wilhelmina Fund**

LAST weekend many people headed to the streets to help collect money for the Koninging Wilhelmina Fonds (KWF), the cancer foundation Queen Wilhelmina Fund. Various teens enthusiastically helped collect in several locations around the island, such as Super Food grocery store and the South Beach Mall. Also around various roundabouts and other areas volunteers collected and in this way made their contribution towards helping the community combat cancer.

Every year in the months of April and May, the KWF has its annual collecting of funds so they can continue to provide

service to the community. The collectors will be on the streets and at various supermarkets and at busy intersections and roundabouts until May 15. They can be recognized by the red aprons they wear, their badge with the KWF Aruba logo, and also the gray collecting boxes with the logo. With the funds the KWF manages to collect, they can continue helping cancer patients and their families.

The KWF hopes the community will give, so they can continue to help families in the community. For more information, or if you also would like to make a contribution, please contact the KWF Information Center at phone number 582-0412 or by visiting their Facebook page called Koninging Wilhelmina Fonds Aruba.











# Sarah-Quita WINS

## first Slalom event in South Korea

**ULSAN**, South Korea – With four days delay, finally on the fifth and sixth days the wind came up again, permitting four eliminations to take place in the Slalom discipline. After two races Sarah-Quita Offringa and Fulya Unlu of Turkey tie for first place.

However, the Slalom rules for breaking a tie say that the windsurfer that won the last competition receives the victory. In this way, Sarah-Quita leads

the ranking.

On the following day, a third race takes place, where Lena Erdil of Turkey wins, now supposedly winning the event, which bumps Sarah-Quita down to the second place, by a 0.3 point difference between the top three windsurfers.

During the event, Lena, Fulya, and Sarah-Quita kept alternating as leader in the ranking. But Lena could not yet

claim the victory, because the wind kept blowing and director of the race decided to run a fourth race. This fourth race became the definitive showdown.

The greatest battle was fought between Lena and Sarah-Quita who were both up for the championship title of the first Slalom event of 2015. However, from beginning to end Sarah-Quita was setting the pace, and slowly but surely

extended her lead over her opponent, who sees her hopes disappear before her eyes when she ends at the third place in the final race.

Subsequently commentators say, "Offringa's first position in the fleet of windsurfers was never in danger, and the Aruban crosses the finish line not only as winner of the heat, but of the event as well."

# Synchronized swimming TOURNAMENT

next weekend



**DURING** the upcoming weekend of May 23 and 24, the Aruban Swimming League (AZB) is organizing the biggest National Tournament in synchronized swimming for the year. This year, there will again be an international element, as a club from sister island Curacao is also participating.

During this tournament the Beginners, athletes who just started training last September, will also participate, giving a presentation of what they have learned so far.

The official opening will take place on Saturday, 23 May, at 6:00 p.m. at the Olympic Swimming pool Roli Bisslick, after which the tournament will start right away. The first to compete will be the Solo routines in the beginner's category,

under 12, and then 13 to 15.

On Sunday, 24 May, the day will start with a Duet routine by the Aruba team, followed by the Team competitions. As a special presentation the Senior Team, who are currently in full-swing preparations for the upcoming Pan American Games, will present their routine. The Senior Team will swim two routines on Sunday morning.

The Senior Team and Duet Team National Competitions will be held on Saturday, 13 June, as some of the athletes will still be abroad in May.

AVB invites all of the Aruban people to their upcoming event. For more information, look them up on Facebook.





## INTERNATIONAL

# North Korea tests ballistic missile



**PYONGYANG**, North Korea (CNN) - North Korea has carried out a successful underwater test of a ballistic missile, the North Korean state news agency reported. Leader Kim Jong Un oversaw the test himself, KCNA reported on Saturday (Friday evening, ET). A submarine launched the missile at a location far from the North Korean mainland, according to the news agency.

Kim praised the test as a "miraculous achievement" and said his country is capable of producing this type of missile. This missile was a "time bomb which will go off on the backs of our hostile enemies at any time," he added, the KCNA report said. Such rhetoric, while alarming on its face, is not unlike Kim's pronouncements after missile tests in the past. While declining to talk about any specific "intelligence matters," a U.S. State Department official said more generally that "launches using ballistic missile technology are a clear violation of multiple UN Security Council resolutions." "We call on North Korea to refrain from actions that further raise tensions in the region and focus instead on taking concrete steps toward fulfilling its international commitments and obligations," the official said.

### Analyst: Hard to defend submarine missiles with nuclear warheads

North Korea has already allocated a significant portion of its budget to the military, and Saturday's announcement does not necessarily signify a ramping up of military efforts.

Daniel Pinkston, deputy project director for North East Asia at the International Crisis Group think tank, told CNN that, if authentic, the latest missile test "would be quite significant," since North Korea has been working on these capabilities for decades.

"If they can deploy an operational submarine that could launch ballistic missiles armed with nuclear warheads, it would give them a pretty credible second strike capability, and it's difficult to defend against. So it would give them the kind of deterrent that they have said they wish to have," he said. "Everyone knew they had been working on this. I think actual flight test is sooner than people had expected."

### Anti-ship missiles

Also Saturday, a South Korean defense ministry official said North Korea had fired three ship-to-ship missiles from the sea near North Korea's eastern city of Wonsan.

No other details were available as of yet, the official said. The missiles were fired in an hour-long window Saturday afternoon local time (between 3:25 and 4:23 a.m. ET.)

The anti-ship missiles are designated KN-01 type by South Korea, and are not in the same category as the submarine-launched ballistic missile reportedly tested by the North. That launch was from a port farther to the north, up the eastern coast of the Korean Peninsula.

News of the latest missile firings come one day after [North Korea threatened to attack](#), without warning, any South Korean naval ships that entered disputed waters west of the peninsula.

South Korea responded by threatening to retaliate if North Korea carries out any acts of aggression.

## Man, woman charged with murdering two policemen in Mississippi



A man and woman in Mississippi were arrested and charged with murder on Sunday after two police officers were shot dead a day earlier while conducting a routine traffic stop in Hattiesburg, officials said. Authorities had launched a manhunt after at least one suspect fled the scene of the shooting in a police car later found abandoned, and residents in the city about 80 miles (130 km) southeast of Jackson were told to stay indoors. Marvin Banks, 29, and Joanie Calloway, 22, were each charged with two counts of capital murder, police said. Banks' brother Curtis, 26, was also arrested and charged with two counts of accessory after the fact of capital murder. Hattiesburg Mayor Johnny DuPree said members of the public quickly helped bring to justice those behind the first killing of a police officer in the city for more than 30 years. "The community helped us," he said, without elaborating. "No parent wants to bury their child before them. And here we are on Mothers' Day. It's a tragedy for all America," he said. The shooting happened on Saturday evening after Officer Benjamin Deen, 34, stopped a gold Cadillac Escalade, and Liquori Tate, a 25-year-old recent police academy graduate, arrived as backup. Two civilians called for help after finding the wounded officers. They were pronounced dead at a hospital in Hattiesburg. DuPree told a news conference it was too early to discuss a possible motive, and that a probe by the Mississippi Bureau of Investigation was ongoing. "We know the officer called for backup for a reason ... we'll find that out," he said. "We will not jeopardize this investigation by guessing." State court records showed the Banks brothers are felons with multiple arrests for firearms charges. DuPree said Calloway had been driving the Escalade at the time of the shooting. The suspects were arrested in different locations in Hattiesburg, police said. The killings are another reminder of the dangers of police work and comes as law enforcement faces heavy criticism over the use of lethal force, especially against minority groups. Deen and Tate are the ninth and 10th law enforcement officers in the United States shot and killed by assailants in 2015, according to the Officer Down Memorial Page, a non-profit organization that tracks police deaths in the line of duty.



# Saudi-led airstrike leaves former Yemen president's home in ruins



**SAUDI-LED** coalition airstrikes in [Yemen](#) continued on Sunday, leaving a Sanaa residence of former Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh in ruins.

An eyewitness said three airstrikes hit the area during dawn prayers and left civilians injured.

"There were three airstrikes during the dawn prayer time that hit civilians, the injured are civilians, they didn't show

us mercy and they didn't let any of God's mercy come down on us. But [referring to the Saudi King, he says] for a lot of days Salman will not give up and will not leave us alone," said Abdullah al-Roudi.

Saleh and his forces back the Iran-allied Houthis in Yemen. Airstrikes in Yemen started in March to prevent a Houthi advance and restore the government of current President Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi. He fled

his home and is taking refuge in Riyadh.

The UN says many of the airstrikes breach international humanitarian law.

Meanwhile Houthi fighters have accepted a five-day cease fire which is due to start on Tuesday night.

[Saudi Arabia](#) proposed the truce in Yemen after the US secretary of state appealed for a pause to allow humanitarian aid into the country.



**Zaid Benjamin**  [@zaidbenjamin](#)

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[#Yemen](#) | The house of former Yemeni president Ali Abdullah Saleh in Sanaa which was targeted by [#Saudi-led](#) coalition.

12:30 AM - 10 May 2015

The ceasefire, scheduled to begin on Tuesday, would help ease the suffering of civilians in the Arab world's poorest country who increasingly lack food, fuel and medicine since the bombing campaign began

on 26 March.

The conflict in Yemen has killed more than 1,400 people – many of them civilians, according to the United Nations.

Source: Euronews

## Turkish PM crosses into Syria to visit historic Ottoman tomb

**TURKISH** Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu briefly crossed into Syria on Sunday to visit the tomb of a revered Ottoman figure and vowed Turkey's flag would fly there forever, prompting Damascus to accuse him of aggression.

The tomb of Suleyman Shah, grandfather of the founder of the Ottoman Empire, had originally been situated further inside Syria but was relocated to within a few hundred meters of the border in February in a Turkish military operation.

Davutoglu made the brief foray over the border shortly before addressing campaign rallies for a June general election in the southern cities of Sanliurfa and Adana. "I bring you the salutations of Suleyman Shah, the leader of our revival," he told the Sanliurfa rally. "Our red flag will fly over Suleyman Shah forever."

The Syrian government condemned what it described

as Davutoglu's "infiltration" without its permission.

"(It) is a clear aggression on a country with sovereignty and a breach of laws and international accords," said a government statement released on the state news agency SANA.

The relocation of the tomb, which involved tanks, drones and reconnaissance planes as well as several hundred ground troops, was the first incursion by Turkish troops into Syria since the start of the civil war there four years ago.

No clashes took place during that operation, although one soldier was killed in an accident.

Turkey, a NATO member with a 900-km (560-mile) border with Syria, wants President Bashar al-Assad removed from power but has refused to take a front-line military role in a U.S.-led coalition, arguing that fighting Assad's forces, not just bombing Islamic State

militants, should be the aim.

The tomb had been on a site within Syria that Ankara considers sovereign territory as agreed in a 1921 treaty. The Turkish government informed the Syrian consulate in Istanbul about the February operation but did not await Syria's agreement, which Damascus said violated the treaty.





# Gun battle in ethnic Albanian region deepens Macedonian crisis

MACEDONIA said on Sunday its police had wiped out a group of ethnic Albanian "terrorists" in a day-long gun battle that left at least 22 people dead at a moment of deep political crisis in the former Yugoslav republic.

NATO, which dragged Macedonia from the brink of civil war in 2001, called for a "transparent investigation" of what went on when heavily armed police entered a mainly Albanian neighborhood in the north shortly before dawn on Saturday. The government said eight police and 14 members of an "armed group" had been killed in the ensuing gun battle, describing the gunmen as former rebel commanders from neighboring Kosovo, which broke from Serbia in war in 1999 and inspired an ethnic Albanian insurgency in Macedonia two years later. Police said the gunmen were plotting to attack civilian and state targets this month, just as a political crisis rocking the government threatens to climax in an opposition rally called for May 17.

Explosions and automatic gunfire rattled the town of Kumanovo through Saturday and into Sunday, recalling the clashes of 2001 between government forces and guerrillas from Macedonia's ethnic Albanian minority.

Then, NATO brokered a peace deal and some of the guerrillas entered government. But tensions remain, fueled by poverty, isolation and the glacial pace of integration with the West.

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg called for calm and "a transparent investigation to establish what happened". The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) also urged a thorough investigation.

Conservative Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski, whose nine-year hold on power has been threatened by allegations of illegal wire-tapping and abuse of power leveled by opposition leader Zoran Zaev, suggested some of those killed or arrested in Kumanovo had fought "in the Middle East".

## FRUSTRATIONS

"This is not a Macedonian-Albanian conflict, but a conflict between people who mean no good to the state and people who uphold the state," he said in a live televised address after police declared the operation over.

Dozens of people were arrested, some of them taken to court handcuffed and in white jump-suits. The scene of the fighting remained off-limits to journalists and residents, many of whom had fled carrying their belongings in bags. An estimated 30 percent of Macedonia's 2 million people are ethnic Albanians.

In Kumanovo, they poured scorn on the official version of events.

"This is pure manipulation," said 40-year-old Elham Murad, an unemployed Albanian man who had fled his home in the besieged suburb. He said he had seen nothing unusual in the days leading up to the police operation, except for a drone aircraft flying above the town the day before.

"This is a stunt by Gruevski to cover up Zaev's revelations," he said. Asked if he would attend the May 17 protest, Murad replied: "I'll go, dead or alive."

Ambassadors of the United States, European Union, OSCE and NATO issued a joint statement saying they hoped the drama would prompt leaders "to pull together and engage in dialogue on all issues facing the country, including the protracted political crisis".

Macedonia's bid to join NATO and the EU, seen in the Balkans as a promise of jobs, prosperity and freedom of movement, is blocked by a long-running dispute with Greece over the country's name.

An Interior Ministry spokesman, Ivo Kotevski, said 37 police officers had been wounded in the clashes, and did not rule out that the death toll might rise. Two were buried in the western region of Tetovo, their coffins draped in the Macedonian flag and escorted by uniformed colleagues.



People being evacuated in armored vehicles





# Colombia president to call for suspension of coca plant spraying



**BOGOTA** – Colombia's president will ask the government to suspend aerial fumigation of coca plants used to make cocaine, he said on Saturday, amid signs the weed killer used may cause cancer, a decision which could complicate the country's war on drugs.

President Juan Manuel Santos said on Saturday he will ask the National Narcotics Council to suspend crop dusting flights after the World Health Organization (WHO) said in March that glyphosate they disperse is "probably carcinogenic to humans".

Colombia is one of the world's biggest producers of cocaine, which is derived from the coca plant. Its leftist rebel

groups, the FARC and ELN as well as criminal gangs, make huge sums from their involvement in its production and trafficking.

"This must not from any point of view, be seen as a softening of our policy against narco-trafficking," Santos said.

"On the contrary, I have given instructions to both the Defense Ministry, police and prosecutor to intensify our work against other parts of the chain, which could even be more effective."

Santos will suggest a transition period lasting until October to shift to alternative means of eradicating the plants, including manually uprooting them, a method used increasingly in recent years while aerial fumigation has been

scaled back.

Crop fumigation is backed by the United States government and carried out by U.S. contractors working in Colombia and the national anti-narcotics police, in a long-running effort to eradicate coca fields and stem cocaine production.

The Andean country's health ministry had called for the suspension of glyphosate use in light of the WHO's reclassification of glyphosate and the Constitutional Council also said a halt would be necessary if the chemical posed a risk. Glyphosate is a key ingredient in the world's most widely used herbicide, Roundup, produced by Monsanto Co. Monsanto says glyphosate has been proven safe for decades, and has de-

manded the WHO retract its claims.

Colombia is the only country in the world where plantations for drug production are targeted from the air and 1.6 million hectares have been sprayed with glyphosate in the last three decades to wipe out coca.

The government and FARC have agreed on a plan to eradicate the drugs trade in Colombia once they reach a definitive peace deal. The two sides are negotiating to end a 50 year war which has killed more than 220,000 though critics question whether the FARC and other groups will abandon the lucrative trade.

Source: Reuters

## Venezuela parliamentary elections to be held in fourth quarter

**VENEZUELA** will hold parliamentary elections in the last quarter of this year and the exact date will be announced soon, the head of the National Electoral Council (CNE) said on Sunday.

Pressure has been mounting on the socialist President Nicolas Maduro to set the date for the 2015 parliamentary elections. The scheduled vote comes as a severe economic downturn pummels Maduro's popularity, leading to speculation in some quarters that the election may not be called at all.

"Where are they getting this idea that we won't have elections?" Tibisay Lucena said in an interview with the Televen television channel.

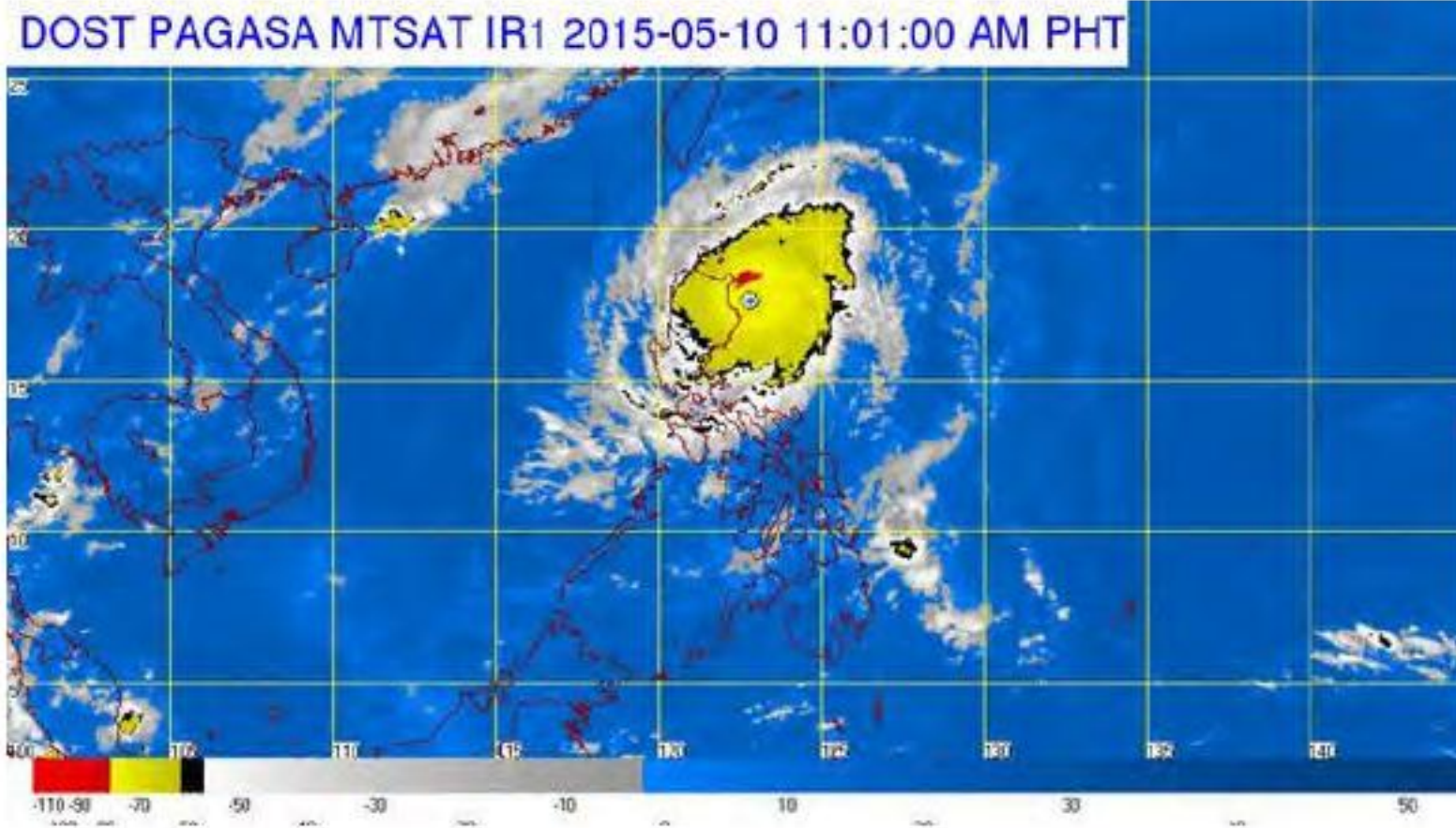
"From the start of this year, we've said that this is an electoral year. We can say that in the last quarter of this year we'll have the elections. We're going to announce it very soon."

Leftist ally and regional heavyweight Brazil on Thursday urged elections to be called as soon as possible.



**Typhoon Noul:**

# Storm signal No. 4 in 4 areas



Areas within the 150 kilometer diameter of the typhoon will experience heavy to intense rains.

PAGASA warned fisherfolks from venturing out to sea as waves could reach more than 14 meters in open seas near areas under public storm warning signals number 3 and 4.

In open seas near areas under storm warning signal 2, wave heights could reach between 4.1 meters to 14 meters while areas under storm warning signal number 1 could experience wave heights of between 1.25 meters to 4 meters.

The government has suspended ferry services in affected areas and some domestic flights have also been cancelled.

Dodong is expected to leave the Philippine Area of Responsibility Tuesday morning, May 12.

Tourists and travellers are advised to refrain from going to beaches along the section of Isabela and Cagayan. – Rappler.com

**MANILA, Philippines** – Four provinces in the northern tip of Luzon were placed under public storm warning signal number 4 as Typhoon Dodong (international name Noul) moved faster and closer towards Cagayan Valley.

State weather bureau PAGASA said Dodong was located at 140 kilometers east southeast of Tuguegarao City (17.3°N, 123.0°E) as of 10 am Sunday, May 10.

Packing maximum sustained winds of 185 km/h near the center and gustiness of up to 220 km/h, the typhoon is forecast to move northwest at 20 km/h. The US Navy's Joint Typhoon Warning Center has labeled Dodong a super typhoon.

Dodong is expected to hit land in Santa Ana, Cagayan Sunday afternoon or early evening.

**Public storm warning signal number 4 was raised over:**

- Northeastern Cagayan
- Batanes
- Babuyan
- Calayan Group of Islands

**The following areas were placed under public storm warning signal number 3:**

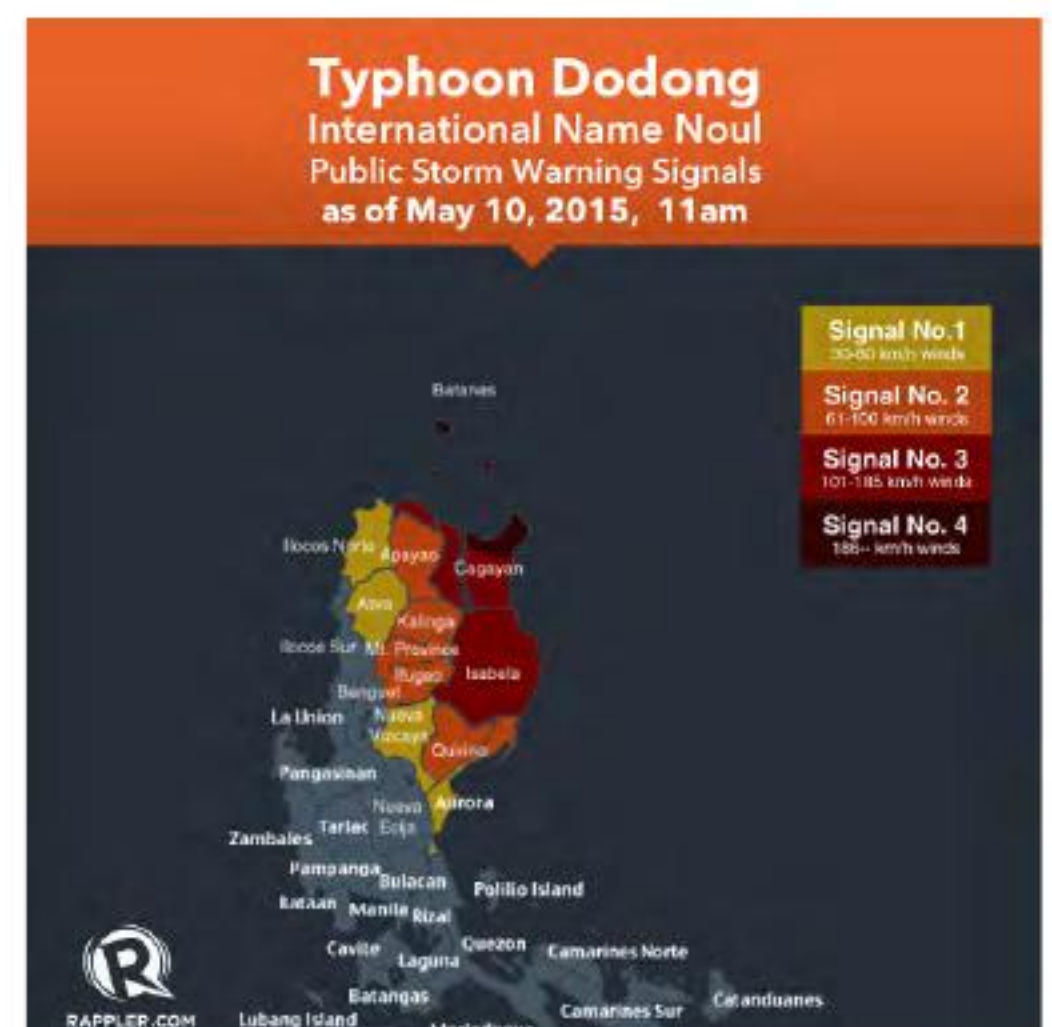
- Rest of Cagayan
- Isabela

**Public storm warning signal number 2 was hoisted over:**

- Northern Aurora
- Kalinga
- Mountain Province
- Ifugao
- Apayao

**The following provinces were placed under public storm warning signal number 2:**

- Rest of Aurora
- Abra
- Ilocos Sur
- Ilocos Norte
- Quirino





# China cuts interest rates for third time in six months as economy sputters



**CHINA** cut interest rates for the third time in six months on Sunday in a bid to lower companies' borrowing costs and stoke a sputtering economy that is headed for its worst year in a quarter of a century.

Analysts welcomed the widely-expected move, but predicted policymakers would relax reserve requirements and cut rates again in the coming months to counter the headwinds facing the world's second-largest economy.

The People's Bank of China (PBOC) said on its website it was lowering its benchmark, one-year lending rate by 25 basis points to 5.1 percent from May 11. It cut the benchmark deposit rate by the same amount to 2.25 percent.

"China's economy is still facing relatively big downward pressure," the PBOC said.

"At the same time, the overall

level of domestic prices remains low, and real interest rates are still higher than the historical average," it said.

Sunday's rate cut came just days after weaker-than-expected April trade and inflation data, highlighting that China's economy is under persistent pressure from soft demand at home and abroad.

While the PBOC acknowledged the difficulties facing China's economy, it said in its statement accompanying the announcement that it wants to strike a balance between supporting growth and deepening structural reforms.

As part of these reforms, it lifted the ceiling for deposit rates on Sunday to 1.5 times the benchmark level, the biggest increase in the ceiling since it began to liberalize the interest rate system in 2012.

## MORE EASING AHEAD

Economists had said it was a matter of when, not if, China eased policy again after economic growth in the first quarter cooled to 7 percent, a level not seen since the depths of the 2008/09 global financial crisis. Indeed, some analysts have even said recently that the PBOC had fallen behind the curve by not responding aggressively enough to deteriorating conditions.

With China set to publish more key economic data on Wednesday, including industrial output and investment, the timing of the rate cut could add to worries that figures may disappoint across the board again, as they did in March.

For now, however, some were confident that policymakers can arrest the slide.

"Intensified policy loosening

will help effectively halt the economic slowdown," said Xu Hongcai, a senior economist at China Centre for International Economic Exchanges, a well-connected think-tank in Beijing. A cooling property market and slackening growth in manufacturing and investment have weighed on the Chinese economy. Annual growth is widely forecast to sag to 7 percent this year, down from 7.4 percent in 2014.

In an attempt to energize activity, the PBOC has now lowered interest rates and relaxed the reserve requirement ratio (RRR) five times in six months, and many economists believe more policy loosening is in store.

This is partly because despite the steady drum roll of policy easing, there are indications it has not benefited the real economy. Some data suggests

banks are not passing on lower interest rates to borrowers, and credit is still not flowing to the sectors in most need of the funds.

"The effectiveness of the rate cut won't be very big," said Li Qilin, an economist at Minsheng Securities. "The PBOC has already cut benchmark interest rate by a total of 65 basis points, but borrowing costs have only fallen marginally."

## STRUGGLING BANKS

Banks are also struggling as the economy founders. Lending has slowed, bad loans are piling up, and profits margins are getting squeezed as China liberalizes its interest rate market. Banks' earnings reports last month showed profit growth hit a six-year low in the first quarter. Given these challenges, the PBOC said it does not expect banks to pay savers the maximum deposit rate allowed by authorities.

And with the prospect that borrowing costs may stay stubbornly elevated, government economists told Reuters earlier this month authorities may ramp up state spending to shore up growth, in the hope that fiscal policy would work where monetary policy hasn't.

But Li Huiyong, an economist at Shenwan Hongyuan Securities, cautioned against thinking that lower borrowing costs would not trickle down to businesses and consumers at some point. "Don't underestimate the cumulative effect of the cuts in interest rates and RRR," Li said. "This won't be the last cut. The rate could be lowered to 2 percent at least, and we expect the economy to gradually stabilize in the coming two quarters."

—Source: Reuters



## SPORTS

# Real Madrid held by Valencia, Barcelona close in on La Liga title



**BARCELONA** are on the brink of winning the La Liga title after Real Madrid dropped two precious points in a 2-2 draw at home to Valencia.

Madrid, who started the day two points behind their arch-rivals, were stunned by two goals in the space of seven minutes by Champions League-chasing Valencia. Paco Alcacer and Javi Fuego both netted and Madrid had it all to do after just 26 minutes.

Cristiano Ronaldo then spurned the chance to bring the home side back into the game as his penalty kick in first-half stoppage time was kept out goalkeeper Diego Alves.

Madrid pushed and pushed in the second half and did get back on level terms through Pepe and Isco, but Alves was heroic in the Valencia goal and he ensured they kept a share of the spoils.

Barcelona moved one step closer to winning the Primera Division title after beating Real Sociedad 2-0 thanks to a header from Neymar and a stunning overhead kick from Pedro in the second half.

Luis Enrique's side could not offer the same barnstorming performance that saw them romp to victory over Bayern Munich on Wednesday as David Moyes' side produced another impressive defensive display against the Catalans, but their resistance wilted after the break.

Barcelona are now four points clear with two rounds of games to go. They travel to Atletico Madrid next Sunday and then host relegation-threatened Deportivo La Coruna the following week knowing one win would ensure the title. However, that is subject to the league averting planned strike.

Barca found a way through in the 52nd minute. Lionel Messi launched a now trademark left-footed cross from the right of midfield into the box and Mikel Gonzalez glanced the ball backwards, allowing Neymar to nod the ball in at the far post for the 50th goal for Barca.

The win was sealed when Messi cut into the box from the right and a Real Sociedad defender sent his attempted cross spinning into the air, and Pedro reacted quickly and intelligently to execute an overhead kick and smash the ball past Geronimo Rulli.

Source: ESPNFC





# ENTERTAINMENT

# Avengers' stays on top with \$77.2 million



**AVENGERS:** Age of Ultron continues to dazzle audiences and take revenge on the rest of the box office offerings.

The Disney/Marvel sequel kept its power two weekends in a row, earning in its second weekend what many summer films would love to earn in their opening weekends — \$77.2 million.

The film now boasts a 10-day total of \$312.9 million, with a massive global total of \$875.3 million, [according to studio estimates from Rentrak](#).

"Everyone expected this to be number one two weeks in a row," says Rentrak analyst Paul Dergarabedian. "It's doing massive business internationally. The global gross is pushing on \$1 billion, and has yet to open in two huge and vitally important global territories," China and Japan. "It's the very definition of a summer popcorn movie." Hot Pursuit, starring Sofia Vergara and Reese Witherspoon, made \$13.3 million in its debut, despite a critical drubbing. The female buddy comedy eked out a paltry 6% critical approval rating on [RottenTomatoes.com](#), though it fared better with audiences, with 51% liking it.

"I don't think anyone expected a massive debut," says Dergarabedian. "For comedies, it's important that critics say it's funny, so that was tough for Hot Pursuit. But what Warner Bros. was trying to do with this film was offer an alternative for female audiences. It should have a solid life on the small screen when it hits home video." In third place, adult drama Age of Adaline, starring Blake Lively, is thriving in blockbuster season as it finds a niche, particularly drawing older audiences. In its

third weekend, Adaline grossed \$5.6 million (with a minuscule drop of 10%), thus bringing its total to \$31.5 million.

April megahit Furious 7 is still revving in fourth place, holding strong considering that the movie is in its sixth weekend of release (\$5.3 million, bringing its North American total to \$338.4 million and its global take to \$1.5 billion). Worldwide, it's the fourth-highest grossing film of all time, behind Avatar, Titanic and the original Avengers.

Rounding out the top five is Paul Blart: Mall Cop 2, another critical bomb that appealed to only 6% on Rotten Tomatoes. But it added another \$5.2 million in its fourth weekend, bumbling its way to \$58.1 million.

Although this weekend is down by about 5% from the same weekend a year ago, Dergarabedian predicts "this summer is going to be ahead of last summer by leaps and bounds."

Not to be dismissed are well-received indies that are holding their own: Ex Machina, which earned \$3.5 million in its fifth weekend out, bringing this critical and audience hit to \$15.7 million. Also, Far From the Madding Crowd, which had a 361% increase over its debut last weekend, raking in slightly more than \$1 million in 99 theaters.

"That's the really cool thing about the movies now," Dergarabedian says. "There's such a great variety of the types of films that are out there: You have the specialty indies for an antidote to your typical summer blockbuster or buddy comedy."